

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TEL AV 04986 191731Z

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ACTION IO-13

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E.O. 11652: GDS

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SUBJECT: ISRAELI COMMENTS ON ILO AND WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCES

REF: A) STATE 168519; B) STATE 169579; C) TEL AVIV 4357

SUMMARY: MINISTRY OF LABOR AND MFA OFFICIALS HAVE
EXPRESSED TO EMBASSY OFFICERS THEIR STATISFACTION WITH
ILO AND WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCES IN GENEVA. THEY
ARE OPTIMISTIC THAT THE U.S. MAY BE ABLE TO ACHIEVE ITS
OBJECTIVES OF DEPOLITICIZING THE ILO AND IMPROVING ITS
EFFECTIVENESS AND ARE READY TO ASSIST IN THOSE EFFORTS.
END SUMMARY.

1. IN SEPARATE CONVERSATIONS THE DIRECTOR GENERAL OF
THE MINISTRY OF LABOR (GUREL) AND THE DIRECTOR OF THE
DIVISION OF INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS IN THE MFA
(BAR-YAACOV) EXPRESSED THEIR APPRECIATION FOR THE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 TEL AV 04986 191731Z

EXCELLENT TEAMWORK OF THE AMERICAN DELEGATION AND

PRAISED ESPECIALLY THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DAN HOROWITZ. THEIR REMARKS WERE SIMILAR TO THOSE OF THE WORKERS' DELEGATE TO THE GOVERNING BODY (SEE TEL AVIV 4357). THEY ATTRIBUTED THE SUCCESSFUL OUTCOME OF THE TWO CONFERENCES TO THE FACT THAT THE U.S. DELEGATION "KNEW WHAT IT WANTED," HAD PREPARED THE GROUNDWORK WITH INTER-GOVERNMENTAL DISCUSSIONS AT THE HIGHEST LEVELS, AND HAD ACCORDED DIPLOMATIC PRIORITY TO DEALING DECISIVELY WITH THE LONG NEGLECTED PROBLEMS OF THE ILO. AS A RESULT, THE U.S. WAS ABLE TO PERSUADE THE EUROPEANS AND INDEED MANY AFRICAN, ASIAN AND LATIN AMERICAN DELEGATES TO COOPERATE IN STEMMING A HOSTILE THIRD WORLD ONSLAUGHT BY PREVENTING A SOLID FRONT OF THE GROUP OF 77. THE WORKERS' DELEGATES FROM THE ICFTU-AFFILIATED UNIONS HELPED IN THIS EFFORT.

2. THE ISRAELIS CITED THE FOLLOWING DEVELOPMENTS AS KEY SUCCESSES: THE GOVERNING BODY, GENERAL CONFERENCE, AND WORLD EMPLOYMENT CONFERENCE WERE ALL CHAIRED BY PERSONS FRIENDLY TO THE WEST; WFTU-ARAB EFFORTS TO INTRODUCE ANTI-WESTERN RESOLUTIONS WERE SOUNDLY DEFEATED; SOVIETS AND EASTERN EUROPEANS WERE CRITICIZED FOR NON-COMPLIANCE WITH THE FREEDOM OF ASSOCIATION CONVENTION; EUROPEANS AND AMERICANS WERE ABLE TO COOPERATE CLOSELY; AND ILO DIRECTOR GENERAL BLANCHARD AND HIS SENIOR STAFF SHOWED A NEW READINESS TO COOPERATE WITH U.S. INITIATIVES SEEKING TO STEM FURTHER DETERIORATION OF THE TRIPARTITE AND DEMOCRATIC CHARACTER OF THE ILO. IN ADDITION, OF COURSE, ISRAELIS WERE PLEASED THAT FOR ONCE THEY WERE NOT THE SPECIAL TARGET OF THIRD WORLD/COMMUNIST ATTACKS. (THE GOVERNING BODY RESOLUTION GIVING OBSERVER STATUS TO NATIONAL LIBERATION MOVEMENTS, INCLUDING THE PLO, WAS SEEN BY THE ISRAELIS AS A NECESSARY TACTICAL STEP TO HEAD OFF SUBSEQUENT ANTI-ISRAEL DEBATES DURING THE CONFERENCES.)

3. GUREL COMMENTED THAT IN A MEETING WITH SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC MINISTERS OF LABOR FROM GERMANY, LUXEMBOURG IRELAND, NORWAY AND SWEDEN, HE FOUND THEM EXPRESSING APPRECIATION OF THE U.S. POSITION AND RECOG-
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 TEL AV 04986 191731Z

NIZING THAT A U.S. DEPARTURE FROM THE ORGANIZATION MUST BE PREVENTED AND A MORE BALANCED OPERATION OF THE ILO ASSURED. EVEN THE FRENCH DELEGATION SHOWED A GREATER THAN USUAL READINESS TO COOPERATE WITH THE WESTERN CAMP, ALBEIT ON PROCEDURAL GROUNDS RATHER THAN ON SHARED POLICY BASES.

4. WITH REGARD TO THE SPECIFIC ISSUE OF EMPLOYMENT

CONDITIONS IN THE WEST BANK, THE ISRAELIS HAVE TOLD BLANCHARD THAT THEY ARE PREPARED TO ACCEPT AN INVESTIGATION BY NORWEGIAN PROFESSOR UPSAL AS HIS (BLANCHARD'S) REPRESENTATIVE. THEY FEEL THAT BECAUSE UPSAL IS A MEMBER OF THE ILO PANEL OF EXPERTS WHICH HELPS MEMBER STATES PREPARE REPORTS ON COMPLIANCE WITH CONVENTIONS AND RESOLUTIONS, HIS REPORTING WOULD BE IN LINE WITH PROCEDURES ALREADY USED BY OTHER AFFILIATES AND WOULD NOT REPRESENT AN EXTRAORDINARY INVESTIGATION. THE ISRAELIS HAVE SOME RESERVATIONS ABOUT PROFESSOR UPSAL'S "LEFTIST" POLITICAL AND IDEOLOGICAL LEANINGS, BUT THEY FEEL THAT BEING UNDER PRESSURE FROM THE DIRECTOR GENERAL HE MOST LIKELY WOULD BE CONSTRAINED TO PREPARE A "BLANACED" REPORT WITH WHICH THEY COULD LIVE. HIS MISSION IS NOW SCHEDULED FRO SEPTEMBER AND IS EXPECTED TO COMPRIZE ABOUT ONE WEEK OF INVESTIGATION IN ISRAEL AND THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES.BAR-YAACOV SAID THAT ISRAELI CONSENT TO UPSAL'S INVESTIGATION IS CONSISTENT WITH GOI POLICY AND NOTED THE SIMILAR INVESTIGATIONS RECENTLY BY UNESCO AND WHO REPRESENTATIVES. ISRAEL HOPES THAT THIS REPORT, WHICH IS TO BE ISSUED UNDER THE SIGNATURE OF THE DIRECTOR GENERAL, WOULD END THE WEST BANK DEBATE AS FAR AS THE ILO IS CONCERNED.

5. COMMENT: THE ISRAELIS ARE CLEARLY NERVOUS THAT THE U.S.DEPARTURE FROM THE ILO WOULD OBLIGE THEM TO FOLLOW SUIT. SUCH A STEP COULD THEN ENCOURAGE THEIR ENEMIES TO TRY TO PUSH THEM OUT OF OTHER UN SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND PERHPAS THE UN ITSELF.THIS WOULD ONLY CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR EXISTING SENSE OF ISOLATION. SINCE ISRAEL PERFORCE CONDUCTS A GOOD PART OF ITS INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS, ESPECIALLY WITH THE THIRD WORLD, ON A NON-GOVERNMENTAL LEVEL, THE ILO WITH ITS UNIQUE TRIPARTITE

CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 04 TEL AV 04986 191731Z

STRUCTURE ASSUMES SPECIAL IMPORTANCE IN THIS REGARD, AS DOES CONTINUING PARTICIPATION IN ALL OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO WHICH ISRAEL HAS ACCESS. THEREFORE, ANY UN MEETING IN WHICH ISRAEL IS NEITHER CONDEMNED NOR THE SPECIAL TARGET OF ATTACK IS WELCOMED.

6. ISRAELIS HOPE, MOREOVER, THAT WITH THE TWO YEAR DEADLINE APPROACHING NEXT YEAR, THE US WOULD DO EVERYTHING TO SUSTAIN ITS INITIATIVE IN BRINGING ABOUT WHAT-EVER MINIMUM CHANGES ARE REQUIRED TO JUSTIFY MAINTAINENCE OF ITS ILO MEMBERSHIP. THEY ARE EAGER TO COOPERATE TO THE FULLEST IN THIS EFFORT. HOWEVER, THEY ARE CONCERNED THAT EVEN IF THE US GOVERNMENT, AFL-CIO, AND EMPLOYERS ARE STATISIFED THAT THE PROCESS OF CHANGE WITHIN THE ILO JUSTIFIES CONTINUATION OF MEMBERSHIP,

CONGRESS MAY TAKE A MORE CRITICAL VIEW, GIVEN GROWING
PUBLIC DISENCHANTMENT WITH THE UN. THEY ALSO WONDER
IF THE NEW WESTERN COOPERATION CAN BE CREDIBLY SUSTAINED
THROUGH 1977 AND BEYOND. IN THEIR TALKS WITH EMBASSY
OFFICERS THEY HAVE STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE WHICH THEY
ATTACH TO CLOSEST MUTUAL COOPERATION AND EXCHANGE OF
INFORMATION REGARDING ALL ILO MATTERS.

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